

FOOTWEAR WITH BLADDER TYPE STABILIZER

ABSTRACT

A stability device that increases foot security on the footbed of a shoe, provides lateral or medial stability, shock dampening, and optimizes flexibility. The stability device includes a resilient bladder insert having a horizontal sole portion underneath a wearer's foot, and a vertical foot portion positioned to a lateral or medial side edge of a wearer's foot. The horizontal sole portion and the vertical foot portion are in fluid communication and are proximal the first or fifth metatarsal regions of the foot. The stability device can be generally L-shaped to cradle a portion of the foot. A compression force of a foot landing on the horizontal sole portion causes an increase in fluid pressure in the foot portion which stiffens the vertical foot portion forming a bumper-like wall for absorbing side impacting force from the foot and serving to keep the foot on the footbed. The stability device can include a plurality of finger-shaped elements. The finger-shaped elements can have a stem portion and a bulbous portion, and can expand in one direction and contract in another in response to an increase in fluid pressure therein. The finger-shaped elements can be connected to straps or a vamp that extends over the top of a wearer's foot, the straps and/or vamp being substantially inelastic in a direction perpendicular to a longitudinal direction of a wearer's foot, such that, contraction of the finger-shaped elements tightens the straps and/or vamp on the wearer's foot. The finger-shaped elements may encircle the top of the foot and expand down onto the foot due to an increase in fluid pressure therein.